

## Nicest "Taxi" in Town

By MARY MORISON

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The starter who stood in front of the old Brevoort house was busy that afternoon. At his sharp whistle taxis came and went, one succeeding another, a continuous wave of them joining the ever-moving stream of traffic that poured up the avenue. And amid it all, stationary, a shadow of the past, stood a hansom cab, its old driver perched atop, his ancient high hat over his eyes, his reins lying slack and flaccid over his patient horse's back.

For twenty years Pat had stood in that same place. The time had been when it was he who had dashed up to collect his fare and had trotted off merrily to join the gay procession of shiny, black cabs going to many a gay rendezvous farther uptown. For a while it had seemed to Pat that the whole fashionable world was waiting for him and his sleek brown horse to whirl it away. But he was living to see his world a little thing at best and his golden place in it usurped by dago taxi drivers and their villainous, reeking cars.

The starter, with a minute or two to spare, roused Pat from his dreary reverie with:

"Well, Pat, no business this afternoon—eh?"

Pat shook his head in a weary negative. "Our day's over—the nag's and mine," he answered slowly. "Tomorrow it's the auction room for me cab and the country for the nag and me, I guess. The city has no use for the likes of us any more; we're done for, sure enough."

"Too bad, Pat, old boy; too bad," sympathized the starter. "It's a long time you've had your stand here and I'll miss you. But everybody's hurrying nowadays; it's catchin' a

at his fare below until she disappeared from sight up the avenue.

Pat knew every landmark on Fifth avenue, but on this last ride of his he gazed at each familiar thing as if seeing it for the first time, engraving it on his city-loving heart forever. The huge library at Forty-second street, with its gaudy lions on each side—"Bogal! how I love them lions!" groaned Pat. The Plaza hotel, which he had seen being built and rush comet-like into first place in the fashionable world. The park, with its mysterious distances of green—he remembered how it looked at dusk, when the green turned to a soft lavender and myriads of little lights, like stars, twinkled through it for mile upon mile.

At Eighty-sixth street he turned east, leaving behind him the modern palaces and the park. He crossed Lexington avenue, then Third, then Second, Avenue A—until it seemed as if the street was leading them right into the East river.

In front of a little row of ivy-covered red brick houses stood a familiar taxicab, and at their approach out of it stepped the same pretty lady. She paid her driver hurriedly and sent him back toward the rushing world of Fifth avenue as Pat drew up.

Pat's fare first caught sight of the lady as he was in the act of descending from the cab. He stood stark still, half in and half out of the cab, motionless, as if turned to stone.

"Philip," said the girl, laying her hand on the gloomy young man's arm. Pat was a gentleman. His association with the beaux monde in those splendid old days stood him in good stead now—for he sat on top of his ancient vehicle looking neither to the right nor to the left; as if he heard and saw nothing. Nobody stirred on the quiet street. Pat, the young lady, and the angry-eyed gentleman were alone on the brink of the East river.

"Philip," continued the lady, breathlessly; "when I saw you drive off with that desperate look on your face—I just couldn't stand it, and when the starter at the hotel told me you had given orders to drive here—to the river—all sorts of horrid things came into my mind. I could have bitten my tongue out for the things I had said to you. I—why did you come to this jumping-off place, Philip?"

The young man's face twisted into a smile. "I live here, that's all," he said, pointing to the last of the little houses in the row. You would have thought you were miles and miles away from the theaters and the ships. It was so quiet and still on East End avenue. The little red house gleamed warm and snug in the fading sunlight; the only moving thing to be seen was a big four-masted schooner (like Pat and his cab, one of the last of its kind) moving majestically up the river in front of them—silent and swift as the wind caught its broad white sails.

Perhaps it was the unexpected beauty of the scene that made the girl's eyes fill with tears and turn her head away. Or perhaps it was because she realized the tragedy of Pat and his old hansom, or the four-masted schooner on what might be its last voyage, or the passing of love—who knows? But whatever it was, it was enough for Philip. He leaped out of the cab and lifted her in, as if she had been a feather. His erstwhile gloomy face was alight, his voice vital and ringing as he called to Pat:

"Hey, there, old sober-sided; drive on. It doesn't matter where—just drive on," and he jumped back into the cab beside the girl.

"Yes, sir," said Pat, who made for Central park, where he saw the green distances beginning to turn to a dainty lavender and the little lights sparkling through the dusk.

"And some folks say the country beats New York," he mused, forlornly—"St. Patrick! How we'll hate it, the use and me!"

Three hours later he opened the little trap door in the roof. "Shure, it's not lookin' I am, sir," he called, "but how much longer do you want me? It's a hard day I have ahead of me tomorrow and it's no dinner I've had, sir."

He heard a laugh below and—"Dinner! the poor old thing wants dinner!" came up through the trap door. Then the young man got out and came up close to Pat.

"Say, driver," he said, smiling at the girl who was leaning around the side, "we both think this is the nicest taxi in town. We've our own special reasons for liking this old bus. What would you say to engaging yourself to us as our own and particular driver at the rate of eighty dollars a month? Would that cover things for you?"

There was a silence, through which Pat looked at all the little blinking lights of Central park and the brilliant lengths of Fifth avenue beyond. The young man, not understanding, continued:

"We're going to be married next week—and well, we like your style, that's all. What do you say?"

"Good God, sir—I, well, make it eighty-five and I'm wid you," said Pat huskily.

**Somnambulist's Escape.**

Being a somnambulist, I have had many startling experiences, but none more thrilling than when I attempted to "secret" some valuable papers my husband had left in my charge while he was away. The first night of his absence I awoke to find myself, papers in hand, in the center of a beam extending from our third-story window to an adjacent tree, and left there by painters. A cold perspiration covered me when I realized my peril, but I managed to climb nimbly down, to reach the street back as I had crawled up.—Chicago Journal.

## SIMPLICITY IN MAN'S FOOD

Human Being Can Live on Almost Anything, According to the Deductions of J. Henri Fabre.

J. Henri Fabre makes it plain in his "More Hunting Wasps" that the man who first thought of crushing wheat, kneading flour and cooking the paste between two hot stones was more deserving than the discoverer of the two hundredth asteroid, and he states that "the discovery of the potato is certainly as valuable as that of Neptune, glorious as the latter was."

Fabre was nearly ninety years old when it occurred to him that the world belongs to the kind of stomach that is independent of specialities, the Detroit News recalls. He shows that if the swallow required, in order to live, one particular gnat, this proud harbinger of spring would die of starvation, as would the lark were his gizzard able to digest only one seed, invariably the same. Man can live on almost anything, and hence his ability to endure the greatest hardships in unfrequented regions. The dog is omnivorous, and therefore cosmopolitan.

It is the narrow menu of the wasp that leads Fabre to bring forward the theory that anything that increases the human alimentary resources is a discovery of the first merit.

## HARD WATER GOOD FOR TEETH

Kind of Drinking Supply Has to Do With Keeping Grinders in Condition.

Lime salts, so necessary to the body, are found in certain waters, which are designated as "hard" when the content of calcium exceeds a minimum. Recently, reports the Journal of the American Medical Association, the pharmacologist, H. H. Meyer of Vienna, a careful scientific observer, has presented statistics regarding the military fitness of young men from different regions in Europe considered in relation to the quality of the water supplies at their homes. His data are interpreted to indicate a smaller incidence of diseased teeth and a larger proportion of persons with healthy teeth in areas where harder potable waters are used.

Meyer even ventures the statement that, in general, the percentage of young men fit for service in the armies was larger in calcareous regions than in those in which other formations prevail. He also cites specific instances of a "deterioration" in the quality of the recruits at Gotba after the population was compelled to change its supply of drinking water from one of hard quality to softened water.

## AN ANTI-

Dr. Grier Wainwright, the Chicago anti-feminist, was talking about the late Lady Randolph Churchill.

"She was a typical Twentieth-century woman," he said. "She claimed all a man's privileges. In fact, if she could have had her way, man would have been the under dog."

"Her ideas remind me of a story about two women who sat smoking and playing poker and drinking whisky-and-soda in a club."

"How's your husband?" said the first woman.

"Slowly mending," the second woman answered.

"Slowly mending? Why, I didn't know he was ill!"

"He isn't ill," the first woman explained. "He's slowly mending my white buckskin riding breeches."

## SHE HURRIED HOME.

Mrs. Johnson had gone away from home leaving Mr. Johnson lamenting. On arriving at her destination she missed her gold brooch and sent a postcard to her servant asking the girl to let her know if she found anything on the dining-room floor when sweeping it next morning.

The servant duly replied: "Dear Madam—You ask me to let you know if I found anything, when sweeping the dining-room floor this morning. I beg to report that I found thirty matches, three corbs and a pack of cards."

Mrs. Johnson returned by the next train.—Pittsburgh Chronicle-Telegraph.

## MUST HIKE.

Sadler—Let's be up and doing. Thompson—Yes, we can't make footprints on the sand of time by hilly down.—London Standard.

## Indigestion

Many persons, otherwise vigorous and healthy, are bothered occasionally with indigestion. The effects of a disordered stomach on the system are dangerous, and prompt treatment of indigestion is important. "The only medicine I have needed has been something to aid digestion and clean the liver," writes Mr. Fred Abby, a McKinney, Texas, farmer. "My medicine is

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